

Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project

DDMHS, Weeks Building, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1601 (802-241-2638)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Vermont Mental Health Performance Indicator Project
Advisory Group and Interested Parties

FROM: John Pandiani

DATE: October 13, 2000

RE: Children Served and Estimated Need for Services

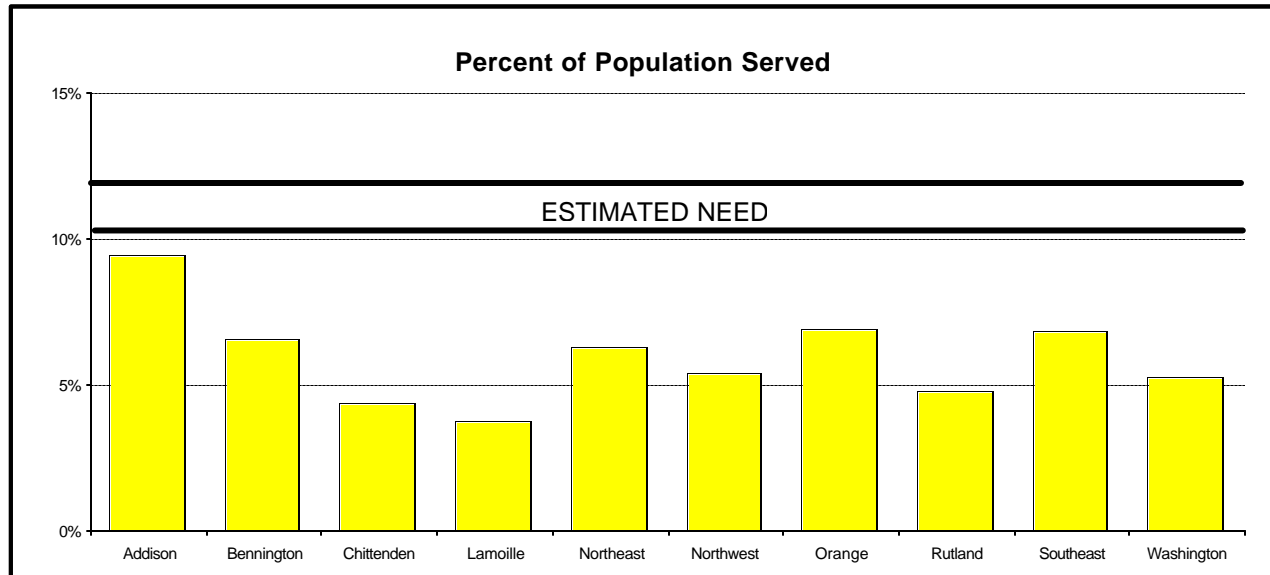
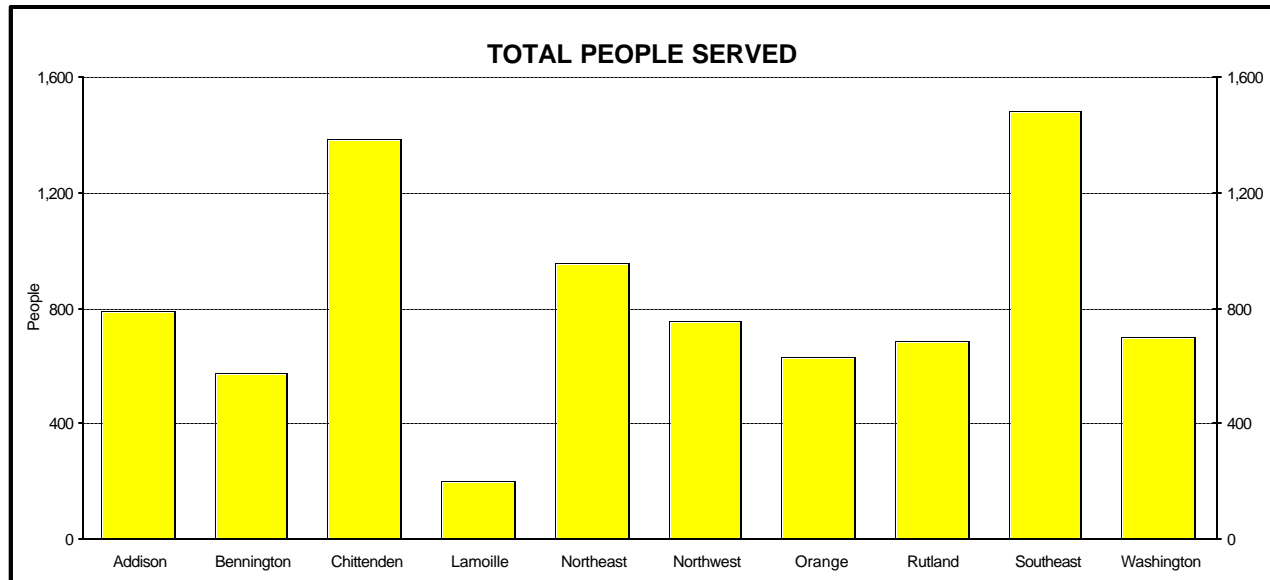
The Performance Indicator Project recently received a request from DDMHS Commissioner Susan Besio for information relevant to the level of need for children's mental health services and the degree to which that need is being met. This week's report provides information relevant to this question by comparing the estimated prevalence of severe emotional disturbance to the proportion of children and adolescents served in each of Vermont's ten service areas. Our estimate of the number of children and adolescents with severe emotional disturbance is based on research commissioned by the Center for Mental Health Services as part of their responsibility for administering the Block Grant for Community Mental Health Services program. State by state estimates of the prevalence of severe emotional disturbance were published in the Federal Register on July 17, 1998, (Vol.63, No. 137, pp38661-38665), along with a detailed description of the methodology used to derive these estimates. According to these estimates, between 10% and 12% of Vermont's children and adolescents can be expected to have a severe emotional disturbance (LOF less than 60). This number is compared to the Child and Adolescent Program caseload for each of Vermont's ten service areas for FY2000. The numbers served are based on Monthly Service Reports provided to DDMHS by designated community mental health service providers.

Results indicate that the number served during FY2000 is about half of the estimated number of young people with severe emotional disturbance statewide. In one service area (Addison), the number served approaches the estimated need. In three service areas (Lamoille, Chittenden, and Rutland), the number served is less than half of the estimated need.

At least two factors need to be considered when interpreting these findings. First, Child and Adolescent Programs at Community Mental Health Centers are not the only children's mental health service providers in Vermont, and the availability of alternative service providers varies among regions of the state. For this reason, the data presented here tend to *overestimate* the amount of unmet need. Second, not all of the clients of Child and Adolescent Programs have a serious emotional disturbance. Many have less severe problems that require less intensive intervention. The actual number of children and adolescents with severe emotional disturbances who are served by these programs is smaller than the total number reported here. For this reason, the data presented here tends to *underestimate* the amount of unmet need. Where these two factors balance, the data presented here provide a reasonable picture of unmet need for child and adolescent mental health services. To the degree that these two factors do not balance, the data presented here provide a biased picture of unmet need for child and adolescent mental health services.

We will appreciate your thoughts on other factors that should be taken into account when interpreting these findings. As always, you can contact us at 802-241-2638 or jpandiani@ddmhs.state.vt.us.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PROGRAMS: PEOPLE SERVED: TOTAL AND PERCENT OF POPULATION, FY 2000



Region/Provider	Children Population	Total People Served	Percent of Population Served
Addison - CSAC	8,337	788	9.5%
Bennington - UCS	8,701	572	6.6%
Chittenden - HCHS	31,603	1,281	4.1%
-NFI		107	
Total	31,603	1,388	4.4%
Lamoille - LCMHS	5,385	204	3.8%
Northeast - NEK	15,204	955	6.3%
Northwest - NCSS	13,912	756	5.4%
Orange - CMC	9,080	629	6.9%
Rutland - RACS	14,347	686	4.8%
Southeast - HCRSSV	21,657	1,482	6.8%
Washington - WCMHS	13,282	701	5.3%
Statewide Rate	141,508	8,161	5.8%

Total people served is based on quarterly service reports submitted by Vermont's community service providers and include people assigned to Children's Services Programs. Population figures are projections for 1998 based on estimates published by the Vermont Department of Health and the Center for Rural Studies at the University of Vermont. Children's population include Vermont residents under 18 years of age. Individuals served by more than one agency are counted more than once. Excludes residential clients. Estimates of need based upon rates of serious emotional disturbances published in Federal Register vol. 63 #137, July 17, 1998.